

Graduate training courses plea

by Ngila Crequer

Career advisers have called for a complete reappraisal of the system of funding postgraduate vocational courses in evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on unemployment.

The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services says a review is necessary to relate courses to the needs of the economy and make the most effective use of qualified manpower.

It says that it is impossible to forecast manpower demand sufficiently far in advance to plan degree courses to meet it, and warns that any attempt at detailed manpower planning would be doomed to failure.

"What might be more feasible is to improve the planning of postgraduate training and conversion courses in order to adapt the output of our very few full-time universities with most continental

countries, very short first degree courses more effectively to meet the needs of the moment", it says.

The advisers press for the provision of late entry into postgraduate training and conversion courses for careers. They argue that late entry makes manpower planning easier because it preserves flexibility and allows young people to make their minds up when they are older, which benefits both them and employers.

There has been a marked increase in conversion courses, but the main stumbling block is the lack of student grants rather than of facilities. The present funding system is complex, divided among the research council, the Government departments and local education authorities.

"As a result it is often hard both for individual students and institutions to get finances for courses where they are needed. One side effect of this system is that institutions are often forced to make vocational

training part of first degree courses because mandatory, i.e. grants will then be available", says the association.

It recommends the inclusion of graduates in some of the special schemes for the unemployed from which many are excluded because of age or level of education. It also urges the restoration of courses, funded by a Government agency and now abandoned because of the cuts, which helped to teach graduates employed for some time how to improve their self-assessment and presentation.

The advisers are investigating ways of helping graduates handicapped by lack of numeracy or other skills, and are calling for financial assistance.

Graduate unemployment is not a serious problem compared with that of school leavers, says the association, but graduates are not exempt from the recession and the position could be improved at comparatively small cost.

New, improved teachers manage to find jobs

by Patricia Santinelli

Fewer but more highly qualified students finished teacher training courses last year and most of them obtained posts in spite of the recession, according to the latest survey carried out by the principals and directors of colleges and institutes in higher education.

The decrease in numbers qualifying for university places in 1979 (7,020 compared with 9,415) which is due to the cutback in teacher training has, however, proved a bonus at a time of serious teacher unemployment, the survey shows.

"The decline in the number of potential entrants to the profession helped to ensure that the majority of those seeking posts have been able to find employment", the survey says.

The survey also indicates that the cutback has not been spread evenly over all courses. It records a significant increase in the numbers qualifying through the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (23.8 per cent as opposed to 17.3 per cent in 1979) and through the BEd degree (23.8 per cent as opposed to 21 per cent).

This increase has been paralleled by a decline in the numbers qualifying through the BEd ordinary and certificate of education. "It indicates a very marked progress towards a better qualified and all-graduate teaching profession", says the survey.

United Kingdom, proportionately the same number as last year. The highest success rate in obtaining posts was achieved by PGCE students. But the survey points out that what appears to be a better success rate for BEd ordinary degree students in comparison to those with honours (72.5 per cent as opposed to 70.1 per cent) in obtaining posts is easily explained by the fact that it is those with guaranteed employment who leave first. This factor also affects the success rate of those qualifying with the Cert Ed.

The survey contains a disappointing message for the Government's efforts to remedy the shortage of specialist teachers. Although there has been a small increase in the numbers (303 as compared to 243) qualifying through one-year specialist courses of training and retraining, most of which are in the shortage subjects, there has been a drop in the numbers obtaining teaching posts from 88.7 per cent to 77.7 per cent.

The effect of the recession on general employment is also reflected in the smaller percentage of students (3.8 per cent as opposed to 5.12 per cent in 1979) who have been using a teacher qualification for entry into other kinds of employment. It also shows that a reduced percentage (4.7 per cent as opposed to 6.7 per cent in 1979) of graduates have obtained temporary employment outside teaching while continuing to seek a teaching post.

Universities' performance worries conservative MP

by Paul Flather

The performance of some of the universities set up in the euphoria of the 1960s has been remarkably and worryingly uneven, a senior Conservative education spokesman has claimed.

Mr Robert Rhodes James, MP for Cambridge and former officer for further and higher education, told the universities conference of the National Union of Students in Coventry he could anticipate the inexorable decline of certain universities because the best young people would not go to them.

He blamed universities that among other factors arrogance, insensitivity, and indifference, were costing them many friends.

The speech was directed at the confusing nature of higher education in Britain, the country now had a large and expensive national university structure of very varying quality and standards.

The euphoria and expectations of the early 1960s had been widely exaggerated. In some universities new seriously overlapped with work done in polytechnics and colleges. The result was differences in standards of leadership, competence, constitution, funding, organization, education provision, and even purpose.

"We have some relatively rich universities and some very poor ones. We have institutions of learning that are the envy of other nations, and some that are at least in some sectors an acute embarrassment."

He said it was all a question of balance. But as solutions, he would lament giving greater control to Government, and he would deplore "a centralised bureaucracy which had hampered the performance at the new universities."

Salvation, he suggested, lay in the hands of those who worked and studied in universities. Universities had to be tough with those whom they were meant to serve.

Later Mr Neil Merritt, chairman of the college principals' organization, the Standing Conference and director of Ealing College, strongly attacked the lack of leadership given to higher education.

Responding to a speech made to the NUS earlier in the week by the Education Secretary, Mr Mark Carver, calling on the education service to proclaim the truth and make its own case, he asked who else could make the case except the Secretary of State.

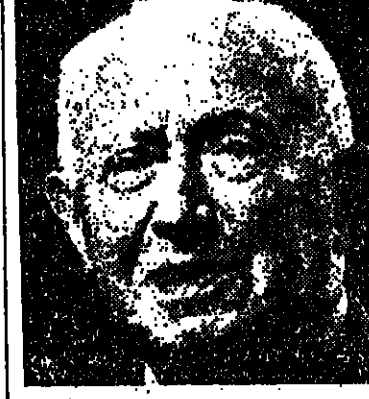
"You should be making the case. Yours is the supreme role in education. It is a disgrace that we don't have effective national leadership. It is equally shameful that higher education enjoys such low esteem in industry and commerce compared to other countries", he said.

He quoted figures showing that 40 per cent of school-leavers entered higher education in Japan, compared with less than 12 per cent in Britain. "As a result the present Government is pleased about that", he added.

Mr Merritt also warned that a "bloody" future lay ahead for colleges who were losing most under the current arrangements for funding. Colleges with smaller budgets, who did not play the "poker game" with historically high costs, were being left with little room for manoeuvre as they ran down services.

He compared colleges to the Premier divisions of universities and polytechnics. "We are more like Coscacks coming from the forest as raiders and cantoring back." But they needed significantly more help.

The NUS agreed to launch a national campaign to persuade colleges and universities to abolish the idea of "reserved business". Students should not have to withdraw when private business was discussed, the NUS says. Students now had an important role to play in all business.



Honours for Shinnell



commentator Ariotti



and secretary Christodoulou

OU degree for Lord Shinnell

Lord Manny Shinnell, at 96 the Labour Party's oldest peer, and Sir How Wheldon, former managing director of BBC Television, are among people who will receive honorary degrees from the Open University this year.

Among the honorary doctors are Guardian cricket and wine correspondent Mr John Ariotti and the secretary of the Arts Council, Sir Roy Shaw.

Academics receiving honorary degrees include Sir Geoffrey Allen, chairman of the Science Research Council, Professor Barbara Jervis, holder of the chair of English at London University's Birkbeck College, and Professor Frank Fielder, director of the regional medical education centre in Northern Ireland.

Two names associated with the Open University from its foundation will also be receiving honorary degrees. They are Lord Percy, who was the first Chancellor, and Anthony Christodoulou, former secretary now with the AUC.

Treasurer calls for funds debate

by Ngila Crequer

Manchester University treasurer Sir George Kenyon, has called for a reassessment of the way universities are financed, and a debate about their true function.

In a speech to the university court he warned: "What we must not be a party to is a limited defence of the present university system right or wrong. We must be prepared to work constructively, to listen and to talk in a re-appraisal which 20 years after Robbins may well be due."

He said politicians wanted a fundamental reassessment of the university world. If that were so, it was better that a review was undertaken by the universities themselves, in collaboration with the University Grants Committee. This might involve an increase in inter-university collaboration and eventually a concentration of minority subjects into centres of excellence.

"Universities have always tried to avoid redundancies but the signs are that this may become increasingly difficult should financial pressures continue to grow", he said. Previous cuts had already resulted in "a mass of neglected maintenance and a plethora of temporary posts with no career prospects."

With more cuts, there was a need to debate the true function of the university, he said.

"We need an honest assessment of true costs in the different sectors of higher education with special reference to research, which is now largely paid for within our normal funding envelopes."

If we wanted a true representation of our selection system and the high standard of our initial degrees, of the fact that we provide residential and recreational facilities of a high order. Above all we need an honest understanding of the value of British graduates to the community.

He said the university world was like the industrial world in that they were both minorities and not all that helpful with much of the public. "We have had to look at other ways of providing education and yet they are not immensely important elements in our society—perhaps in the end the two most important of all," he said. They both needed to be better understood.

Technicians plan protest over freeze

by David Jobbins

Technicians at universities which try to pay for last month's 19.2 per cent pay deal by refusing to accept vacancies will protest by operating a national policy of non-recruitment.

According to the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, at least one university is already using the 6 per cent cash limit announcement as an "excuse" to freeze posts.

During negotiations, technicians were warned that the employers would look at managing levels. ASTMS national officer, Mr Russell Miller, has called on technicians at universities who posts are not filled not to undertake work normally done by a former colleague who has not been replaced.

"If the universities wish to cut their total complement of technicians in the present economic climate, this may be something ASTMS branches feel they have to accept. But the university authorities cannot cut jobs and expect to maintain the same service."

Mr Miller agreed that during negotiations the employers had said they would look at managing levels but made clear that the union negotiators had not accepted that. "Had a productivity deal been made, the agreement would have been different."

Since it was not there is no need for branches to cooperate in a way which would have the effect of many jobs being lost without the employers suffering any penalty.

The first university to freeze posts as a result of the pay agreement was identified by the union. Suggestions that it could be Glasgow were discounted by the university, where a freeze was initiated in 1979.

Glasgow is seeking to shed 200 jobs across the entire spectrum of the next three years. While it is to concentrate on methods of natural wastage, it was confirmed that redundancies are being considered.

The scheme, which is intended to help the union find the right mix of the right career for the right person, will include meetings with precise engineers and university staff, and leads to engineering companies.

Britain failing to teach race lessons

by Patricia Santinelli

Higher education, in the universities in particular, is failing to develop multi-cultural teacher education, says a confidential report prepared by Birmingham Polytechnic on behalf of the Commission for Racial Equality.

The report, based on a survey by the Centre for Advanced Studies, part of the polytechnic's International Centre for Multicultural Education, aimed to provide information on provision in institutions of higher education and to provide a reference grid.

The survey shows that development in multi-cultural education is minimal at universities and is only partly relieved by a small growth in courses in polytechnics and colleges of higher education.

In 52 university institutions surveyed only four courses in multi-cultural education were offered and only one of these (at Brunel) was compulsory. Thirteen other courses had elements relating to multi-cultural education at nine different institutions but only three were compulsory.

The report says: "With some notable exceptions there appear to be few obvious new initiatives being taken in this sector. However, this may well be due to economic restraints operating in this sector first."

The survey shows that polytechnics are showing a steady growth of new courses and other developments in multi-cultural education. This is fairly limited, with 18 different courses being offered by nine polytechnics and only four of them compulsory.

But the report points out that many colleges of education merged with the polytechnics in the mid-1970s and by now many will be re-evaluating the validation of their Council for National Academic Awards courses.

It is likely we have identified many of the new proposals but it is equally likely that many more will be in the pipeline in the next 12 months."

In the 64 colleges of higher education surveyed, there does appear to be activity in the generation of courses which include some element of multi-cultural education, but the main thrust for development is coming from those colleges which serve large communities, says the report.

Fourteen different colleges are reported as having a total of 26

different courses for multi-cultural education but only four are listed as compulsory. On the other hand, there were 46 different courses which were described as containing elements of such education being offered by 17 different colleges.

But the authors of the report stress that offering courses for multi-cultural education should not be necessarily interpreted as a commitment to the concept of this type of education.

They point out, too, that there are several other areas affecting the way multi-cultural education is carried out which should be the subject of a detailed investigation such as institutional policy, staffing and staff development, resources and facilities for teacher education programmes and the evaluation, course review and planning of such programmes.

Several months later another tribunal ruled that Mrs Wilkie was a victim of sex discrimination when she subsequently applied for a full-time post but was not called for interview. The evidence of the tribunal criticized the evidence of college director Dr Reginald Reale as evasive, thoroughly unsatisfactory, and inconsistent. The college administration was also criticized for its handling of the case, representing 70 per cent of the staff who publicly protested to the Council for National Academic Awards, alleging the college was being run in an authoritarian and undemocratic way.

The full-time post for which Mrs Wilkie was not interviewed was taken up by Mr Colin Mair and college sources say the public administration post was a direct replacement for the vacancy when Mr Mair resigned a few months ago. Mr Mair has been working full time in Strathclyde University's department of administration since November, but sources say he has continued to work in the college on a temporary basis.

A college spokesman said the post would be re-advertised later this month once it had gone through Strathclyde Regional Council, which finances the college. He denied reports that the post was being re-advertised because the short list contained two candidates thought to be equally well qualified for different areas of the job.



David MacDowall: savings claim.

conclusion that the courses should stay at PNL."

These factors come under two headings: financial and academic. Dr MacDowall said he was surprised accurate costings had not been done. To move the equipment from PNL, which holds the National College of Rubber Technology, to PNB

Boundary myth exploded in fees wrangle

An adult education organizer has scuttled the widely held belief that students who cross local authority boundaries to attend courses are an extra burden on resources.

Outside students are a useful source of profit, claims Mr Rhys Hall, area organizer for the London borough of Barking, in an article in the latest edition of *Adult Education*.

The bitter wrangle over the withdrawal of local education authorities from recruitment schemes for the full, unsubsidized cost of the course has meant that many students can no longer go and study outside their home authority without paying extra.

Instead they are expected to pay the full cost of classes without any help from their own authority, or to pay a special rate set at a higher rate than local students.

Mr Hall concludes from a study of Barking College of Adult Education during 1978-79 that many of the arguments in favour of a different fee structure are false.

"There is a strong financial case for resisting changes in fee structures aimed at the exclusion of outside students," he writes. "The financial facts do not justify such exclusions and economic arguments are being used to conceal a prejudice against outside students which arises from an unjustified view of such students as parasites."

If outside students had been excluded from Barking in 1978-79, classes would have been unfilled and closed, which would have deprived a larger number of local students than outsiders, as well as the total adult education programme of its variety, he argues.

Income derived from outside students, about 10 per cent of the total, was used to offset the cost of a net profit of £500 in terms of fees alone. The extra income in the form of recruitment for the course of the course from outside students' own authorities was therefore foregone.

"Adult education requires free traffic between authorities," Mr Hall writes. "The differential fee is the equivalent of the prohibitive customs duty and prevents adult education working at maximum efficiency."

Engineering move to attract women

A major bid to boost numbers of women engineers in Britain is to be launched this summer when more than 400 industrial places are to be established for school students interested in engineering.

The scheme, known as Insight 81, is sponsored by the Engineering Industry Training Board and will involve Bank, Cardiff, Heston-West, Loughborough, Salford, Sheffield, Avon, Oxford and Cambridge universities and Imperial College.

Half-day travel is to be provided for girls' expenses at the universities. The scheme will have a total of 400 places, to be eligible, the places will have to have the equivalent of O level in mathematics and a science subject and be studying the science subjects for levels.

The scheme, which is intended to help the women find the right mix of the right career for the right person, will include meetings with precise engineers and university staff, and leads to engineering companies.

Rubber courses 'save money for PNL'

by Paul Flather

Governors at the Polytechnic of North London claim that more than £200,000 can be saved if courses in polymer remain at PNL rather than be transferred to another London polytechnic.

PNL's Court of Governors has written to the Inner London Education Authority this week outlining a series of reasons why it is opposed to recommendations that rubber technology courses should be transferred to South Bank Polytechnic.

The move was recommended in a report set up jointly by ILEA and the polytechnics, to examine ways of rationalizing certain courses in London.

But both PNL and South Bank now accept the need for one strong rubber technology department, providing a greater flexibility, wider range of courses, and more links between industry students and specialists.

Dr David MacDowall, director of PNL, said: "We fully appreciate the need for rationalization. But we feel the working party did not consider certain important factors which when included lead to the

Tories call for referenda on NUS membership question

Conservative students this week called for referenda in all universities and colleges affiliated to the National Union of Students to decide if students want to stay in the union.

The call came as part of a five-point national campaign launched by the Federation of Conservative Students to try and win back the NUS, which the threat of widespread disaffiliations as a lever.

Mr Peter Young, PCS chairman, has written to all NUS student unions urging referenda on the grounds that many students have never had a chance to express their opinion on the NUS. He has also written to the NUS demanding immediate reforms.

The PCS is calling for:
● the NUS president and full-time officers to be elected by a national secret ballot;
● all NUS conference delegates to be elected by constituency-wide ballot;
● a referendum on all full-time officers to be elected by a national secret ballot;
● the cost of NUS to be cut from £1m to about £150,000 to cover fundraising activities, with wide spread staff redundancies;

● a review of the two national conferences a year which at a cost of £160,000 are too expensive.
In anticipation of the NUS response, the Federation has already prepared posters and leaflets supporting its case for withdrawing from NUS. Suckers say: "NUS—money down the drain" and "NUS—still crazy after all these years."

A poster compares the current NUS executive with the Soviet Union, suggesting the only difference is that the NUS group includes Trotskyist members.

"If there are no signs of NUS making substantial changes we will put forward a motion at our next conference to try and destroy the union, and set up a new national organization to represent students", said Mr Young.

The NUS president, Mr David Armstrong, said he would meet Mr Young and put him right. "We are constantly reviewing our practices as a democratic organization. But we exist to carry out policy given to us at conference not in private submission."

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Glasgow Tech rethink on lecturing post

by Olga Wojtas, Scottish Correspondent

Glasgow College of Technology is to re-advertise a post for which it has already interviewed a short list of five candidates. All five have been informed that they will be re-considered for the post of lecturer in public administration unless they formally withdraw but it is not clear whether they will be interviewed again.

The post is believed to be identical to a social policy and administration post featured in two industrial tribunals cases successfully fought against the college by Mrs Patricia Wilkie. Mrs Wilkie is one of the candidates on the present short list. Last year Mrs Wilkie was ruled to have been unfairly dismissed from a temporary lecturership in social policy and administration.

Several months later another tribunal ruled that Mrs Wilkie was a victim of sex discrimination when she subsequently applied for a full-time post but was not called for interview. The evidence of the tribunal criticized the evidence of college director Dr Reginald Reale as evasive, thoroughly unsatisfactory, and inconsistent. The college administration was also criticized for its handling of the case, representing 70 per cent of the staff who publicly protested to the Council for National Academic Awards, alleging the college was being run in an authoritarian and undemocratic way.

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A college spokesman said the post would be re-advertised later this month once it had gone through Strathclyde Regional Council, which finances the college. He denied reports that the post was being re-advertised because the short list contained two candidates thought to be equally well qualified for different areas of the job.

Top-level talks on formally ending the post-entry closed shop agreement between Leeds city council and the main lecturers' union are expected before the end of the month.

Senior councillors have yet to confirm the date, January 26, offered by the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education. The union's president, Mr Jim Richards, said a senior official—probably assistant secretary—likely to have the delicate task of explaining why Natsfio no longer wants the union membership agreement offered by the city council in an effort to beat the closed-shop restrictions in the Employment Act.

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Politicians accused over adults

Political leaders were accused this week of being dishonest in their attitude to the education of adults by Mrs Anne Ward, chairman of the Inner London Education Authority's further and higher education sub-committee.

Speaking in the London Association of Adult Education, Mrs Ward said that politicians of all parties were keen to identify the educational needs of adults but failed to provide any resources to meet them.

"The educational world is provided with answers to important needs of adults but in the education of adults with resources and is even having them taken away", she said. "Leaders of political parties being very dishonest in the manner in which they are dealing with this."

She warned the voters against the threat to experimentation in adult education as people become more reluctant to use scarce resources for experiments that might fail.

Plessey sponsor industrial chair

An electronics firm is to help sponsor a new industrial professorship at a polytechnic to research the future of industry and education.

The Plessey Chair in Computing will be funded as soon as possible. A new department of computing and microprocessor applications has also been created.

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Books in Progress

The Books in Progress register (formerly administered by the National Book League) is an information service open to writers currently working on non-fiction works, including academic research.

★ Writers already working on a book or piece of research are invited to register their subject.

Rate changes 'will lead to amputation'

by John O'Leary

Ministers are undertaking a "major offensive" against educational opportunities in further and higher education, Mr. John Kinnoch, chief shadow education spokesman, has said.

Changes in the Rate Support Grant settlement will result in "wholesale amputation" of parts of Britain's education services, Mr. Kinnoch told the Cardiff branch of the Socialist Education Association. There was no essential expenditure left to cut and local authorities would find it impossible to sustain services from increased rates, he said.

"The new reduction in resources of £25m in colleges of further education, £12m in colleges of higher education and polytechnics and £30m in universities face these institutions with a real crisis and deprive youngsters of necessary facilities while jeopardising the critically important research activities of the polytechnics and universities," Mr. Kinnoch said.

Government economic policies would further cut any progressive ideas, contained in the forthcoming Macfarlane Report on 16 to 19-year-olds since they would require additional financial resources. As long as monetarist madness reigns, Britain will continue to have a lower proportion of adolescents in systematic training and education than any comparable country," he added.

Education ministers had timidly accepted the awful consequences of the cuts and were now preparing to go even further, reducing educational provision and narrowing access in every part of the system.

Full-cost fees for overseas students had cut demand for places in higher education and denied opportunities to the Third World, while local government spending cuts had virtually wiped out discretionary awards in some areas. Changes in student union financing would save practically nothing but would create a new bureaucracy and promote disaffection.

"Most of all," said Mr. Kinnoch, "the boys' own continues to promote the idea of replacing student grants with loans and has recently been reported to be considering levying a special tax on graduates. The first idea is old, reactionary, malicious and costly. The second idea is vicious, deft and totally contrary to every principle of the British taxation system."

The introduction of loans to Britain would further inhibit access to higher education, which should be expressed as an attack on the right to learn as a conspiracy against talent and an offensive against excellence, he said. If private finance had ever been a plausible option, it would already be supporting thousands of students on inadequate grants and millions who never entered higher education.

'Hedgehog' reactions predicted

Some universities could go bankrupt and all will be seriously damaged by the Government's policy of immediate cuts in all public expenditure, Mr. Maurice Shock, vice-chancellor of Leicester University, told the University Council.

He said that faced with this prospect of bankruptcy the University Grants Committee would "presumably take the view that it should spread the misery over the whole system."

"We would then be left with universities so weakened that they would be unable to perform the tasks that society has come to expect of them. The reaction of individual universities would be like that of a hedgehog under attack: defensive, prickly, immobile."

Only the Government could provide a remedy, and Mr. Shock

called for special funds for universities over the next five years to pay for the costs of rationalisation, including contraction, and innovation and change.

This would help them to adjust to new levels of expenditure and to new financial reality. Without such special measures irreparable damage would be done.

He said that the recently announced cut in the universities' grant, plus the shortfall in fees from overseas students next year, has set them an impossible task.

"It is no answer to suggest that they should contract and thereby bring their expenditure in line with their income. Contraction over and above natural wastage and economy in the provision of services, is an expensive business. The universities must have the money to pay for it," he said.

Data row delays report

By Charlotte Barry

An argument over statistics has forced the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education to revise a major report on the future of adult education and delay its publication.

The report makes a critical appraisal of the effects of cuts in public spending on adult education and recommends a short-term political strategy. It is one of a dozen due to be published by the council early this year and is being compiled by the council's committee A, chaired by Mr. John Blagden, chairman of Dorset education committee.

The dispute arose after statistics used in the report were found to be inconsistent with those in a report by the Department of Education and Science. It centres on local authority spending on adult education over the past five years.

For some time the council has

argued there was a steady decline in spending on adult education during the mid-1970s, which was accepted by the adult education community.

But DES statistics suggest that things have not been as bad as the council has been making out. Figures from annual returns made by all 100 local authorities to the Government show that in the five years up to 1979 there was level funding.

The ACACE statistics were put together by one of the council's research assistants and were based on a limited sample of local education authorities.

Mr. John Taylor, secretary of the advisory council, said he had no choice but to use the official figures. Yet what he has heard from the field does not seem to square with these findings.

Exam board decides to keep its general requirement

by Patricia Santinelli

Despite the narrowing specialisation in schools and colleges has led the Joint Matriculation Board to decide to keep its general requirement—evidence that a good standard of general education has been achieved—for admission to all five universities.

The requirement applies to all 17,000 students who apply for admission to Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield and Birmingham universities but tends to favour mainly mature and overseas students whose qualifications are not based on A-levels.

In the past the JMB's education committee has not for the

first time been debating whether the requirement is worth retaining. The conclusion was that it was not after all an unnecessary hurdle.

"The universities must clearly be seen to be concerned with quality and values which are wider than the proficiency in narrow fields and which are valued by the universities," Mr. Taylor said.

He said the requirement was not to be removed but was to be used to encourage students to take a broad range of subjects and to ensure that they were not too narrowly specialised. The requirement was to be used to ensure that students were not too narrowly specialised.

John O'Leary reports from the North of England Education Conference held in Carlisle last week

OU fears fourth channel

The award of the fourth television channel to the Independent Broadcasting Authority will cause considerable difficulty for the Open University over the next four years, Lord Perry of Walton, the university's former vice-chancellor, said.

Lord Perry told the North of England Education Conference that it had been hard to win even the limited amount of air time needed for the small spectrum of courses run by the OU.

"The fourth channel, in the hands of the IBA, will I believe, make matters worse rather than better," he said. "It is bound to cause competition for ratings between BBC2 and Channel 4 just as there is current competition between BBC1 and IBA. Thus, BBC2 will be less able to provide time for minority audiences."

Lord Perry's comments came only a week after the announcement that one of the OU's best known academics, Professor Naomi Macintosh, was to leave after three years as programme editor on Channel 4. She said that adult education would have an important place in programming.

At present, the OU uses television economically and sensibly, said Lord Perry. It accounts for only 5 per cent of teaching material.

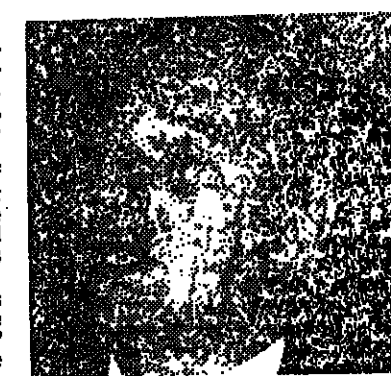
New technology could still revolutionise education, both at school and for older learners. Much of what students learn at school, college or university is out of date not just before they enter but before graduation, he said, arguing the case for continuing education.

Halsey calls for bonus year

Everyone should be given an extra year's education wherever they like as soon as Government funds allow it, Professor A. H. Halsey, of Oxford University, told the conference.

Professor Halsey said that there would be calls for the school leaving age to be increased to 17 when next there was an upturn in the economy. But he would see more value in offering an extra year's education to the whole population, regardless of age.

While not agreeing with the Government's overall strategy, Professor Halsey said there was nothing intrinsically wrong with a policy of minimal interference. Education authorities could be abolished and institutions given direct grants, with the money going to adult education.



Lord Perry: "Considerable difficulty."

backed by modern teaching methods. "Clearly, education must continue throughout life to provide the updating and retraining that a modern career will demand," said Lord Perry. "In almost every developed country, politicians have paid lip service to the need for continuing education; in very few cases has anything significant been done to provide it."

The only way out of this dilemma was either to provide for continuing education from sources other than Government funds or to cut the cost of initial education. New technology might enable the latter to be achieved, since it could speed up the learning process in schools and enable the average time each person spent in the education system to be cut by a year, saving £500m annually.

But Mr. Peter Newsam, education officer of ILGA, returned to the theme in his address to the conference. Under the new grant authorities were paid for levels problems as long as they did not try to deal with them, he said, referring to the fear that ILGA might lose all its grant if it increased its spending in line with inflation rather than cutting services.

Mr. Mark Carlisle, secretary of state for education, earlier told the conference that increasing attention would have to be given to continuing education in the coming decade. But he warned that a comprehensive service for adults could be prohibitively expensive.

"Those who could benefit from it are more likely to be willing to meet much, if not the whole, of the cost of what they receive," he said. "Some provision will have to be subsidised if those most in need of it are to be able to take it up."

Priorities would have to be developed to this end, he said, in conjunction with the Advisory Council on Adult and Continuing Education.

Poly director calls for less teaching and more research

Polytechnics should spend up to 15 per cent of their total resources on pure and applied research, Mr. Ron Hedley, retiring director of Trent Polytechnic, has urged.

Mr. Hedley, director at Trent since it was first set up in 1970, said students at the polytechnic were being taught "too long and too frequently."

While not disregarding the conventional view that polytechnics are primarily teaching institutions, he said he would like to see more research at Trent, spending on research at least 5 per cent, or £300,000, to be increased by up to 15 per cent.

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Exam board decides to keep its general requirement

Despite the narrowing specialisation in schools and colleges has led the Joint Matriculation Board to decide to keep its general requirement—evidence that a good standard of general education has been achieved—for admission to all five universities.

The requirement applies to all 17,000 students who apply for admission to Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield and Birmingham universities but tends to favour mainly mature and overseas students whose qualifications are not based on A-levels.

In the past the JMB's education committee has not for the

first time been debating whether the requirement is worth retaining. The conclusion was that it was not after all an unnecessary hurdle.

"The universities must clearly be seen to be concerned with quality and values which are wider than the proficiency in narrow fields and which are valued by the universities," Mr. Taylor said.

He said the requirement was not to be removed but was to be used to encourage students to take a broad range of subjects and to ensure that they were not too narrowly specialised. The requirement was to be used to ensure that students were not too narrowly specialised.

London hogs the grants limelight

Ironically, it was the position of London after the award of the block grant allocation of local government which attracted most attention at the conference.

After Mrs. Nicky Harrison, chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities education committee, had accused Mr. Carlisle of presiding over the destruction of the capital's education service, Mr. Jack Springett, chief education officer of the AMA, alleged that the whole country could suffer next year as a result of London's misfortune.

Because of the new system, he said, the basic line for education budgets would be 2 or 3 per cent lower than this year unless the Inner London Education Authority could find an increase of some 3 per cent from the ratepayers of its constituent authorities. The situation could not be swept under the carpet, he added.

Mr. Carlisle refused to repeat in detail to questions related to the block grant system, since this was a topic for the Department of the Environment. To switch London away from London was a deliberate collaborative research project in the needs of the Middle East and to prepare a "modern programme of

medical education" at the five-year-old Saudi school.

Dean Robert Van Citters of the University of Washington said the Saudis were considering paying his faculty members a 50 per cent salary supplement in addition to housing and travel expenses while they were in Jeddah. As with the Colorado agreement, no dollar figure has been put on the affiliation, but University of Washington administrators have indicated that the income might be off cuts anticipated after recent reductions in its state and federal medical research to medical education.

Colorado dean Ray Schwartz said detailed contracts to implement the overall agreement in specific areas were still being worked out, and it would be worth saying how much they would be worth.

The University of Washington medical school expects to sign a similar affiliation agreement soon with King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah. Its long-term goal, according to a spokesman in Seattle, is to make the Saudi institution a centre of medical excellence. Subsidy objectives are to train an academically oriented medical faculty at a cost of \$5m to expand teaching and research in biology, in return for help in establishing its own life sciences centre.

At present both the University of Riyadh and King Abdul-Aziz medical schools are run mainly by faculty members brought in from Europe and America on individual contracts. The two schools are expected to spend many millions of dollars on institutional contracts like those being negotiated with the universities of Washington and Colorado, to develop their own corps of Saudi and eventually reduce their dependence on expensive foreigners.

A year ago the University of Riyadh gave Princeton University \$5m to expand teaching and research in biology, in return for help in establishing its own life sciences centre.

Long rows of hulking green machines fill an engineering laboratory at Purdue University, where grinding contraptions, most of them are museum pieces and of the kind that would be found in a museum rather than in a factory. These are many of the kinds of equipment that cannot be replaced by modern manufacturing methods with these.

At Ohio State University the situation is similar and students are complaining about being shut out of overcrowded courses. Dean Donald Glover says he had to begin last year with 18 professors short. Students begin queuing at 7 am to fight for a chance to work on out-dated computers.

Leaders of the engineering profession say that the United States has allowed its engineering schools to go downhill just when the high between technological progress and productivity is being more clearly recognized.

Paradoxically, industry is at the same time, the engineering profession says, that the United States has allowed its engineering schools to go downhill just when the high between technological progress and productivity is being more clearly recognized.

At present, the directors of the five institutes are accountable directly to the ministry of Higher Education. In future, however, they will come under the same organization as the French cultural centres abroad. Other changes are also being made in the institutes.

They are to be called upon to teach 10 hours a month, a measure which it has been suggested will be far from pleasing to neighbouring universities of the host country. "Foreign governments will not take this increased competition lying down," said the director of the French Institute in London.

In addition, the Student Loan Bank handles a basic grant of £100

Medical schools in Arabian agreement

by Clive Cookson

Two American medical schools are negotiating multimillion dollar contracts to help their young countries in Saudi Arabia develop into world-class centres of medical excellence.

The University of Colorado medical school recently signed a general "affiliation" agreement with the school at the University of Riyadh. It provides for Colorado to assist the 10-year-old Saudi medical school in almost every area from faculty development to curriculum development, biomedical research to medical education.

Colorado dean Ray Schwartz said detailed contracts to implement the overall agreement in specific areas were still being worked out, and it would be worth saying how much they would be worth.

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Reagan names education chief

from Deborah Kasout

WASHINGTON

Dr. Terrell Bell, commissioner of education for the State of Utah, is president-elect Ronald Reagan's choice to head the United States Education Department, and his nomination is expected to signal a softening of Mr. Reagan's view to abolish that government agency.

Before his nomination, Dr. Bell met Mr. Reagan and his advisers to discuss the fate of the Education Department and apparently agreed to take the department over to be dismantled. Instead, the Reagan transition team may be considering either reducing the department's Cabinet rank and making it an independent entity similar to the National Science Foundation, or creating a new Department of Human Resources which would contain the Health, Education and Welfare functions which were once housed there.

Dr. Bell, who served as United States Commissioner of Education in both the Nixon and Ford administrations when the Education Department was a part of the HEW, testified before Congress during a period when he was in favour of the creation of a separate department of education, by President Carter.

In 1976, Dr. Bell left Washington to become Utah's Commissioner of Higher Education. He arrived there during a period when the state's educational system faced budgetary problems and conflict among state colleges and universities. But according to Mr. Donald Holbrook, director of the State Board of Education, Dr. Bell was able to "keep higher education in Utah away from the brink of disaster."

Dr. Bell's latest statistical bulletin shows that most further education college students achieve only a low level of success compared with a high majority in the schools with which they were associated.

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The new director of the Science Research Council is to be Dr. Robert A. Green, of the department of experimental physics at Liverpool University. He will replace the present director, Professor A. J. G. Rees, who is retiring, and will take up post in July.

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Classical institutes in danger

from Guy Neave

PARIS

Radical changes in the status of France's renowned overseas research institutes are in the offing. There are five institutes affected among them the Ecole Française d'Athènes—one of the foremost schools in the field of classical archaeology and Greek civilization. In future, they are to come under the responsibility of the French foreign office rather than, as at present, the ministry of higher education.

This proposal, contained in a draft Bill, currently under development at the ministry of higher education, has been the subject of bitter recriminations and protests from the most eminent figures in the area of classical scholarship. The Ecole Française d'Athènes is not the only one affected. The research institute at Rome and the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology at Cairo as well as the Casa de Velázquez at Madrid are also threatened by the new Bill.

The overseas research institutes, the first of which was founded in 1846, are mainly concerned with the study of the history, culture and archaeology of their host countries. They take a very limited number of graduate research students and fellows and are highly selective. It would be difficult to find other institutes that have made so marked a contribution to the field of classical scholarship with the exception of the famous Ecole des Chartes in Paris, which many of its fellows are drawn from.

The new legislation, drawn up without any apparent consultation with any of the interested parties, will utterly change the present special status of these institutes, which are classical and cultural studies centres. They are to assume responsibility for providing places for researchers in the field of scientific inquiry found in the host country. The emphasis on classical studies, the draft Bill suggests, will be dropped, and the institutes will be placed under the aegis of the foreign ministry rather than the ministry of higher education as is regarded by many academics as a serious threat to their independence and academic autonomy.

At present, the directors of the five institutes are accountable directly to the ministry of Higher Education. In future, however, they will come under the same organization as the French cultural centres abroad. Other changes are also being made in the institutes.

They are to be called upon to teach 10 hours a month, a measure which it has been suggested will be far from pleasing to neighbouring universities of the host country. "Foreign governments will not take this increased competition lying down," said the director of the French Institute in London.

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Heavy defeat for Labour on student loan proposal

from Einar Odden

OSLO

After two months of fighting, Norwegian students may be able to enjoy a peaceful new year. The Labour government's proposal to collect interest on student loans while the students are still in school, has been soundly defeated in Parliament. United student opposition and firm political opposition prevented the government from undertaking the most controversial change in the Norwegian student loan programme in its 33-year-old history. However, another interest went through Parliament, and from next fall on, Norwegian students will have to pay 9.5 per cent interest on their loans.

The original interest proposal turned out to be one of the most spectacular defeats ever suffered by Labour. Not only did the usually polarized student groups unite overnight, but both the conservative and the Socialist Left joined forces to fight the proposal, fearing it would damage the recruitment to higher education in Norway. The proposal, which would have increased the interest rate from 4 to 9.5 per cent, was also opposed by a number of students with weak parental income. The socio-economic groups within the Labour youth organization, AUF, spoke out against the interest proposal.

At present, Norwegian students have access to both grants and loans but do not pay interest on the loans until one year after completion of their studies. Had they been forced to pay interest on loans while still in school, students with four to six years of studies would have had to come up with the time of graduation. Those who choose to, or have to, study abroad would have suffered even more since they have to take up bigger loans to cover their "higher living expenses."

Certain groups of students would have some £30,000 in debt by graduation. Had the proposal gone through Parliament, the intense debate on the proposal, Labour dropped the record low of 1975 after the Common Market debate which split the party severely. The interest proposal alone has not caused this drop, but is considered one of the many factors.

Norway has had one of the most liberal student loan programmes of all western countries since the Student Loan Bank was founded in 1947. In 1960, the cornerstone of the present system was laid, enabling Norwegian students to get through their higher education with little or no debt. In 1975, the average loan was about £200, only half of what the student must borrow. The students who go abroad utilize their borrowing possibilities to the limit, some of them borrowing up to £3,000 a year. In addition, the Student Loan Bank handles a wide variety of grants varying in size from only a few pounds to a £1,500 grant for those who study at foreign schools with fees of £1,500 or more. Students going abroad also receive travel grants.

In addition, the Student Loan Bank handles a basic grant of £100

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given to all students aged between 20 and 30, a means tested grant based on parental income, an artists' grant of £1,500, a supplementary living expenses grant of £500 for those who live away from home, and the formerly mentioned travel grants and tuition grants for those who study abroad. Theoretically a student may qualify for all these grants.

It is not the cost of the grants which



The Brazilian military are struggling to maintain their hold on dissent as the much-vaunted "economic miracle" falters.

A Frankenstein model of university growth

Higher education in Brazil faces a grim era after a decade of spectacular development and growth. The military-backed government of President João Baptista Figueiredo has adopted a policy of attacking expansion of the universities through cutting spending and forcing closures of faculties, which has provoked unrest and strikes on campuses throughout the country.

President Figueiredo's response to recent protests was to replace the civilian education minister Eduardo Portello, who had shown some sympathy towards the universities' demands for more funds, by a military man, General Ruben Ludwig.

His appointment represents a sinister shift in policy for a country which has been trying to clean up its tarnished image on human rights through a well-publicized "democratic opening" freeing political prisoners and dropping press censorship.

It means that education has once again been placed firmly within the orbit of the army and security forces. Each federal university already has its own security force, and the lack of funds and the lack of credibility. He called the Brazilian model of university development a "Frankenstein" and his outspoken criticism of government failures put him in the opposition's camp.

University teachers blamed the lack of forward planning and saw the former education minister as the cause of problems in the universities. He called the Brazilian model of university development a "Frankenstein" and his outspoken criticism of government failures put him in the opposition's camp.

Pat Smith looks behind recent shifts in the Brazilian government's attitude towards higher education

The present unrest in economic terms. On November 17 teachers at 22 federal universities launched a strike movement for higher pay, the overhauling of the teaching profession and an increase in the education budget.

The National Union of Students (UNE) cited three causes at its



President Figueiredo; unemployed.

32nd congress in Piracicaba, São Paulo, in October: the reduction in spending since 1967 from 11.7 per cent to 4.3 per cent of the budget; the expansion of private sector education; and the lack of university autonomy.

Teachers have the biggest axe to grind. While student numbers have tripled, the number of teachers has dropped. In 1974 there

were 23,678 teachers; by 1979 there were 21,893. During the same period the number of students graduating rose from 174,862 to 240,691 and the number of post-graduates doubled from 7,094 to 14,602.

There has also been growing discontent over the big salary differences between lecturers in the two types of federal universities. Those in the 15 foundations under MEC earn far more than colleagues of the same standing in the 19 universities ruled by the rigid Public Service Administration Department.

Salaries have now dropped so low, argue the *autarquias*, that people are no longer attracted to the teaching profession. Those who do reach are obliged to take other jobs.

Lack of tenure aggravates the situation. Only 31 per cent of staff in the *autarquias* and 10.7 per cent in the foundations are on permanent contracts. The rest are under employed, contracted by hours, classes or weeks without the minimum guarantees and with no possibility of promotion.

The national lecturers' association has called for a restructuring of the career ladder to avoid the collapse or increase in higher education. In case of symptomatic of the crisis in education as a whole.

Universities in Brazil have enjoyed a decade of unparalleled growth. An "open door" policy with twice-yearly entrance exams, the extension of credit to institutions and the licensing of thousands of new courses bumped up student

numbers from less than 500,000 in 1970 to 1.5m in 1980.

Private universities and hundreds of small faculties have sprung up everywhere offering degrees at cheap rates and of dubious quality.

Official rhetoric called this "democratizing higher education". In truth a rapid uncontrolled expansion simply served to boost the government's propaganda message: in Brazil development is bigger if not better than anywhere else.

Similar accusations of failure are levelled at higher education. Only the younger generation of Brazil's student middle-class are suffering the consequences.

"In Rio de Janeiro 15,000 students are unemployed or underemployed, yet we haven't enough technicians to mend televisions," moaned a Portello in October.

Young graduates can find no place in the highly regulated traditional professions nor in public service which is fraying. But because of the massive gap between rich and poor many more practical jobs are too low paid and of too low status to be considered.

Brazil's need for an educated labour force to aid development, however, has always conflicted with dissent.

Student revolt in the late 1960s was just as much part of the social transformation as the regime imposed after the 1964 army coup. Dissent then was quickly but brutally quelled: spies were sent to mix in university circles, denunciations and intellectual repression "disappeared" teachers by the police, and intellectuals fled.

As the lowest level, educational expansion has scarcely touched the majority of the population. At present there are 22 million illiterate Brazilians, out of a population of 120 million. Seven million children do not attend school.

Malaysia's share of enrolments increased significantly at every level of education between 1970 and 1976. In upper secondary and post-secondary education the proportion of Malays to non-Malays rose from 49 and 43 per cent respectively to 81 and 54 per cent.

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WORLDWIDE

movement founded in 1970, in been unsuccessful. Education officials say that just half of the million illiterates who remain with the agency were taught to read and write. But many of the read back into illiteracy due to a superficial nature of the literacy campaign.

Similar accusations of failure are levelled at higher education. Only the younger generation of Brazil's student middle-class are suffering the consequences.

"In Rio de Janeiro 15,000 students are unemployed or underemployed, yet we haven't enough technicians to mend televisions," moaned a Portello in October.

Young graduates can find no place in the highly regulated traditional professions nor in public service which is fraying. But because of the massive gap between rich and poor many more practical jobs are too low paid and of too low status to be considered.

Brazil's need for an educated labour force to aid development, however, has always conflicted with dissent.

Student revolt in the late 1960s was just as much part of the social transformation as the regime imposed after the 1964 army coup. Dissent then was quickly but brutally quelled: spies were sent to mix in university circles, denunciations and intellectual repression "disappeared" teachers by the police, and intellectuals fled.

As the lowest level, educational expansion has scarcely touched the majority of the population. At present there are 22 million illiterate Brazilians, out of a population of 120 million. Seven million children do not attend school.

Malaysia's share of enrolments increased significantly at every level of education between 1970 and 1976. In upper secondary and post-secondary education the proportion of Malays to non-Malays rose from 49 and 43 per cent respectively to 81 and 54 per cent.

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New top brass close ranks against critics

The Department of Education and Science was the victim of searing criticisms at the end of last year in a report on higher education funding from Parliament's select committee on education.

Next week, the DES is expected to give its formal reply to the MPs. Meanwhile, it has just completed a major reorganization of its higher education branches. Here, PETER DAVID talks to the new men who will be responsible for implementing Government higher education policy over the coming years.

A mood of calm defiance characterizes the top brass of the Department of Education and Science in the aftermath of the searing criticisms it sustained last year in the Parliamentary select committee report on higher education.

"Select committees inevitably bash central government," says Mr Richard Bird, the deputy secretary with overall responsibility for higher education. "That's what they are there for. We expect it."

The DES must nevertheless have been surprised by the harsh tone in which the MPs castigated the department's record and cast doubt on its right and competence to be responsible for higher education planning.

From the department's point of view the criticisms were singularly badly timed. The cumulative pressure of spending cuts is forcing new and complicated initiatives on to the DES agenda. These include creating a new management structure for public sector higher education, and finding a mechanism by which to introduce some kind of manpower planning concept.

On the face of it the select committee report should have damaged morale and weakened the DES's negotiating position when the time comes to introduce these changes. Yet the mood of the civil servants responsible for higher education in the department appears surprisingly buoyant.

For Richard Bird personally there are two reasons for his ability to take a relatively sanguine view of what the MPs said. One is that he moved into the top job only after his predecessor, the hapless Alan Thompson, had already appeared before the committee and drawn its fire.

The other reason, and probably the more important, is that Bird's accession coincided with a major reorganization of the department's handling of higher education matters. The changes were designed specifically to improve coordination between the universities and the public sector, and they will help to defuse the MPs' criticisms.

Civil servants will not put it in so many words, but the object of the reorganization was to break the strength and separatism of the university lobby within the DES. Since their reshuffle from direct treasury funding in the early 1960s, the universities had come under a separate branch of the DES where they constituted a powerful lobby able to fight for resources without direct competition from public sector institutions.

One branch, HE2 (higher and further education), controlled non-university higher education. Another, HE3, was concerned with university policy and funding. Each came under a separate deputy secretary, so that joint oversight of higher education could happen only at the higher level of the deputy secretary, who lacked a staff of his own.

The new system brings together financial planning for both sectors in a single group, HE1, headed by Mr Bird. Within it a single team in one division will be responsible for finance and higher education policy across the binary line.

According to Bird, the administrative changes mark the culmination of a 15-year process in which the universities have become progressively less special and isolated.

It seems to me to be many years ago that the universities of authority which the universities especially having the universities in the first instance funded by the Treasury with no involvement of a ministry of higher education. It is curious, may of it was brought into the government. Even that it was a single deputy secretary, it is intended to operate in a very

individualistic way. Certainly when I joined the department it was very striking how much power the individual branches seemed to have.

"University branch was very much a power base and had various traditions. It was extremely difficult for my predecessor and his to deal with the resourcing aspects of the whole of higher education. You could not afford ever to be on leave when the question of resourcing was in play."

The head of the transitory "superbranch", HE1, is also new to the job. Mr John Thompson moved there from a similar post in the universities branch, part of the power base his own branch is now supposed to dismantle.

He denies that the university lobby was ever specially powerful, but believes that the new structure will pave the way towards a more unitary policy in higher education.

"In the discussions about resources when the two sectors were in competition before there was no natural forum in which the distribution of priorities could be settled, it was one branch talking to another. When resource allocation comes to be settled in the future, there will be one head of one branch to refer to," he says.

But there will still be dialogue and discussion. But at least he can be more certain that the disputes can be settled by one team adhering to one policy.

For the universities, the new orthodoxy of unitarism in the DES could appear threatening. But the overall feeling among senior civil servants in the department is that universities will be spared the important administrative changes which are inevitable in the public sector.

Despite their incorporation in one branch, the university and public sector are bound to be dealt with as separate entities by the DES, which stands in a very different formal relationship to each sector.

On the public sector side, there is an overwhelming consensus that some change must be introduced to fill the vacuum left by the disappearance of the Oakes report. The universities, however, are regarded by the department as well equipped to fight for themselves.

"Although there are criticisms, there is certainly no consensus that the system by which the universities are funded and managed needs change outside the change that can be introduced by the UGC, allowing for the potential it has to be more interventionist," says Bird.

"If the system as a whole requires that it should all be looked at again along with the public sector, I suppose we should not shy away from it despite the difficulties. But my impression is that it is not a burning issue, and even if it is, it will be dealt with in a very

Thompson, too, sees little need or likelihood of major DES initiatives in the university sector. But Bird and Thompson clearly base their confidence on a belief that the universities and the UGC will be able to adapt to the new financial planning and higher education policy across the binary line.

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The new deputy secretary responsible for higher education in the DES takes over a stronger and more streamlined organization than his predecessor.

For the first time, the deputy secretary will be in direct command of the science branch, as well as three higher education branches which have been reorganized to make planning of the university sector and the public sector more integrated.

Like many senior officials, Bird has been moved around Whitehall and was a consort to the DES's first posting, after education at the DES and the Manpower Services Commission over who should run the running in provision for the 16-19 age group.

It was Bird's last job before his promotion to deputy secretary, and gave him an opportunity to earn a reputation as a diligent technician able to counter the unconventional measures then employed by the MSC to build up its strength.

Mr Roy Walker, the new under secretary in charge of HE2, takes over a branch which has changed little as a result of the reorganization which have affected the other branches.

Division A, under Mr John Melhuish, is responsible for student affairs, international activities in higher education, and matters concerned with the Open University.

Division B, under Mr Colin Graham, is concerned with institutional government and legislative matters. Division C, under Miss Josephine Gilbey, deals with policy of student awards.

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Treading a delicate line between three races

Malaysia is rethinking its student recruitment programme. David Dickson reports

For the past 10 years, the government of Malaysia has been conducting an intensive campaign to increase both the number and proportion of Malay students in the universities. This move has been part of a general strategy to raise the participation of Malays in the country's professional and economic life to a level enjoyed by its other two ethnic groups, Chinese and Indians.

The government now seems to have decided that this policy has gone too far. It has decided to reduce the number of Malay students in the universities to a level enjoyed by its other two ethnic groups, Chinese and Indians.

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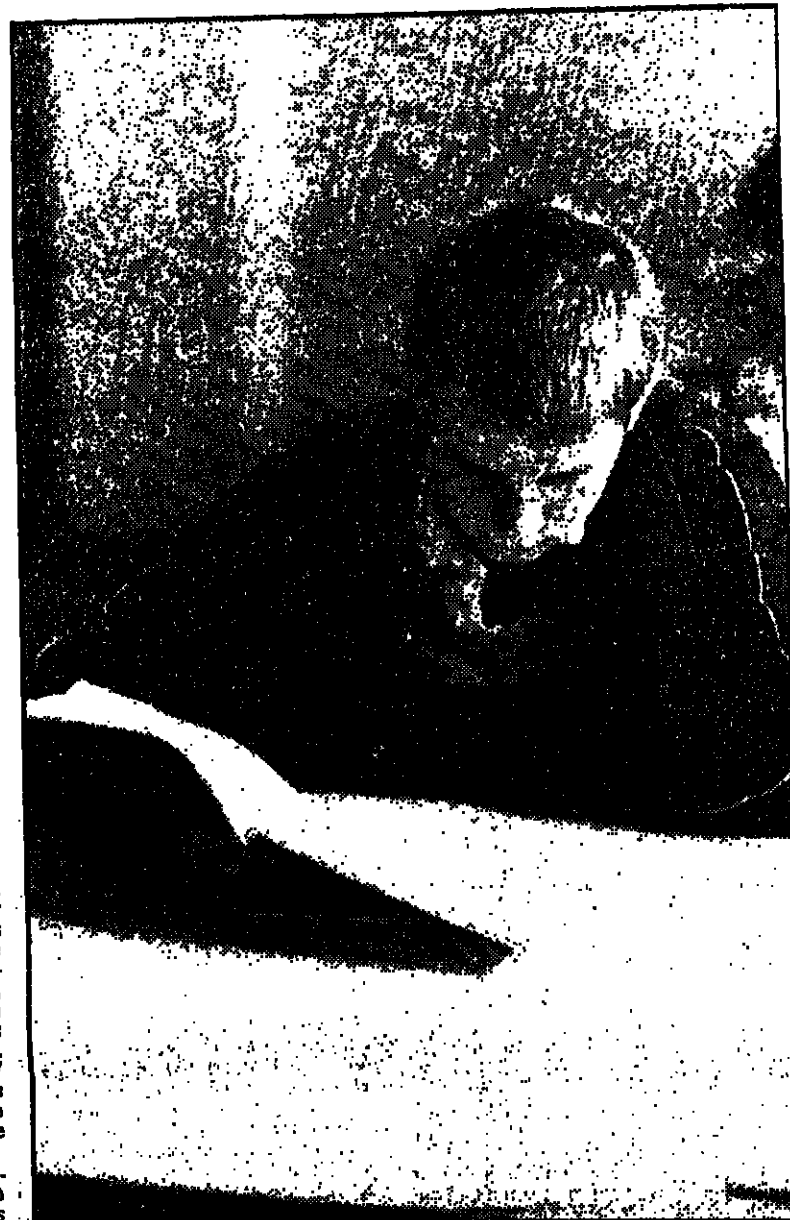
BOOKS

The comprehensive schools debate

by Colin Lacey

In a long tradition of significant reports from Secondary Schools, it is probably the most important produced by the National Children's Bureau. The collection of data on education, health and nutrition background, training and employment of over 600 children born in March, 1958, represents a remarkable achievement; it has made available to researchers a source of data unique in its scope and potentialities. In keeping with the Bureau's previous practice the data have been put at the disposal of all Social Science Research Council scholars and will be available to bona fide researchers. In

The estimates produced by National Children's Bureau, based on the results of tests given to children at age 11 when they joined their secondary schools, repeated at age 16. There are considerable benefits to be obtained from administering the same test on each occasion and these benefits were achieved for reading mathematics. On the other hand there are considerable difficulties involved in designing a test that can be repeated accurately at the full range of abilities at 11 and at 16. The



SALLY GREENHILL

The method of analysis involved in comparing the outcome measures for each type of school while controlling for the effects of school type and student characteristics was the analysis of covariance. The main variables of the study were the mean mathematics and science achievement, the mean quality of that schooling. These two control variables were the socioeconomic status of pupils and the percentage of minority students in the school. The other variables were the mean reading or general ability of the pupils, the gender of the pupils, whether the pupil was a boy or a girl, the social class of the pupil, and the degree of interest shown by the pupil in school. The dependent variable was the teacher's estimate of the pupil's achievement at age 16.

The results of the analysis are presented as differences between two types of school. This sometimes means that the results are not statistically significant. It is important to attempt to assess critically the outcome of the analysis. The results of the study, it must be emphasized, are not regarded as estimates of the true outcome, but as estimates of the outcome that can be based on

In order to judge whether he achieves this objective, we can examine their speeches. The first example is the speech by the "Innocence": "We have genuinely pleased that the final result of the competition seemed to be so favorable for the 'Innocence' and ends on a shrill note of triumph: 'The winning school formation is the national school.' Much of what is said between would totally discredit the serious research institute in the field of public funds. The unexpected and reassuring finding of the survey is also described: 'DEB is not a school for the elite, but for everyone concerned with their own schools.' They also describe the method of presentation of results as 'the contrived and stored data', and 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' results are achieved better results than the combination of grammar and modern schools'. When they get onto the press coverage, they published rapidly and without comment, they have not formed their judgment even though balanced. They find a contradiction to mislead the press! It seems that in this case the 'Innocence' is not so much the political opinion but

continued on facing page

The topics discussed within the standard framework begin sensibly with Ryle's philosophical background, his early articles, and the view of philosophy which then dominated his primary work in the philosophy of mind. Ryle himself always emphasized the logical,

It is a pity that Lyons's own view of Kyle is subordinated to the requirements of an introductory commentary. It is not that he fails to make critical comments on Kyle's detailed arguments, nor that he totally avoids any more general assessment of Kyle's approach to his philosophical material. Lyons indicates where he thinks Kyle's position is especially weak, for example in his discussion of perception, and where he thinks it is especially valuable, for example in the discussion of consciousness. He is also generally inclined to praise Kyle's work by comparison with very recent work, for example by



Gilbert Ryle

For these reasons Lyon's overall assessment of Ryle is apt to seem ill-defined and hazy. Two points where this appears are in the con-

Pursuit of happiness

It is very often maintained both by philosophers and by laymen that the point or purpose of human life is to achieve happiness, which is thus *summum bonum* or the final, ultimate end of all our actions. If this is tightly knit and skillfully argued work, the author analyzes the concept of happiness, its relation to pleasure, and its relation to *eudaimonia*, and inquires whether it is the proper or sole end of man. Do we have a duty to pursue our own happiness? Is it our duty to pursue the happiness of others? What is the connexion, if any, between happiness and morality? Do we—should we—pursue virtue because it is the means to happiness, or do we desire that virtue is pursued for the sake of happiness while maintaining that we should not pursue happiness to the extent that we achieve virtue, or to that extent we deserve happiness?

Happiness is not something we can directly aim at producing through our actions; it is a by-product of other actions, and is a mental or psychological condition—the author calls it an attitude—which obtains when a man's wants and desires are in general satisfied. A person whose wants and desires are not satisfied is dissatisfied and

Graham Bird

Graham Bird is professor of philosophy at the University of Manchester.

The interpretation of sensory experience

This book is a *Festschrift* for Strawson, edited by Peter Strawson, the Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy at Oxford. The essays cluster around three topics to which Strawson has devoted much of his intellectual life: investigation of free will and moral responsibility via such notions as resentment, regret and remorse; philosophical problems in logic and philosophy of language ignored by the over-zealously formalising logician; and post-Kantian metaphysics, in particular the analysis of our experience of art and nature. The book is written to a uniformly high standard. Each begins with some idea Strawson has proposed, vigorously develops it, and Strawson generates a discussion in agreement with Strawson that is taken of nothing so much as a dispect. The book is a handsome one, tribute to a distinguished thinker.

One might object that the late Gareth Evans, who wrote the 'Introduction' which probes the conditions

which make it possible that our experience is experience of a world that exists independently of us. Strawson has argued that for experience to be as of an objective world the experience must be of a world that is in some sense spatially ordered. He calls this a "conceived world" in which the Protagonist's only sensory modality is hearing. Strawson argues that for the Protagonist to get beyond the idea that his experiences are *his* experiences, he must be able to identify a sound as the same particular sound that he had before, thus making possible the idea of a sound that continues to exist when it is not being experienced. To be able to relate the sound to a particular, the Protagonist's auditory experience must have a type of coherence and order that will allow him to conceive of himself as "travelling" away from and then back towards a particular sound.

Strawson claims that by beginning the fiction by assuming that objectivity demands the reidentification of particular items. Accordingly, to Evans, Strawson thereby imports spatial notions where objectivity itself does not demand it. However, this is not the case. The Protagonist's native presumption in favour of the

Strawson-Kant thinks that objective experience must be of a spatial nature. Independently of the world must, for Evans, be composed of substances. For we can give content to the idea that if we were to go to a certain position we would have a certain auditory or visual experience just because we have a certain position. But we cannot have the idea of a material substance without with primary properties which cause us to have that experience. The rural Protagonist, by contrast, does not have the necessary conceptual fund to make sense of the idea of there being a persisting material substance. His experience is of a certain kind of feeling. This argument is pursued with sophistication and energy.

In his reply to Evans, Strawson points out that Evans is trying to get more out of a transcendental argument than it will legitimately give him. Human nature is such that we interpret our sensory experience as of spatially distributed material objects which provide the causal ground of our experience. But Evans is guilty of "conceptual procrelism" in thinking that any experience of an objective world must be like this. One can imagine beings who were internally diagnosed to interpret

sensory experience differently. For example, one can imagine a being who saw the world as constituted of persisting colours arranged in space. He must have *some* theory about the colours persisting, but it need not resemble our theory of colour perception at all. Of course his world too is spatial; and so we are left with an objective spatial world and without any convincing argument to show that an objective world must be spatial.

Those who are prone to gloom might well get gloomy about the possibility of providing a valid transcendental argument for an essentialist conclusion. However, the proper response, I think, or of admiration and gratitude. For while such a debate may not yield any results about what experience of an independently existing world must be like, it does yield remarkable insight into what our experience of the world expands. It is thus sensitive to the nature of our own conceptual frame of reference that is the mark of Peter Strawson's work.

Jonathan Lea

Jonathan Lear is a fellow of Clare College, Cambridge.

from facing page
the Centre for Policy Studies any
credibility at all.

The most important criticism is that the authors Caroline Cox and John Marks seem quite unable to grasp the nature of the problem being researched and the methods being used to tackle it. They become completely preoccupied with the fact that "what is a raw data" are nowhere to be found. This is arrant nonsense. No researcher could produce raw data in the form of a table with a sample of this size. It is also odd that the "adjusted" results have been "adjusted" and are given, and that in certain analyses some of the data are used. It would be tedious to take up all their misconceptions and errors in detail, but it is important to say that many of the points they make rest on a misunderstanding of the design and procedures followed by Jane Steedman and other researchers in general. Some of the points they make are so basic in validity and had they been understood

attempting to misrepresent and by importing their own considerable political bias into research into education, they endanger the debate about the NCB's results and the validity of any conclusions about our education system. The authors list and repeat, many times, all the features of the survey design that seem to them to bias their results. They also repeat, many times, the reasons why the survey is a selective sample. The calling effect on the reading test will affect grammar pupils more than the other pupils, the test practice effect for those pupils will be more than for those above all the "deteriorating" of the data. In fact, in my opinion the design contains a fairly fundamental flaw, towards grammar pupils, which makes the design of the study big; it is difficult to judge but I think it is more important than the issues raised in the CSE pamphlet.

The major difficulty lies in attempting to control for selection effects and family background effects that are analytically distinct from the effects of schooling. Social class and parents' education are almost certainly inadequate for this purpose, and this is presumably the reason for Jane Steedman bringing in a variable like the teachers' estimate of parental 'interest' (at age 16).¹⁶ However, there will still be selection effects that the researchers are unable to remove and these will

almost certainly be to the advantage of grammar schools. In addition, a large number of studies have shown that an important influence on the learning of school children is the nature of the school population itself. This effect is also independent of the teaching and learning in schools and has most certainly have caused an improvement of the grammar school results. Finally there is the nature of the tests and the nature of the school curricula. In so far as this comprehensive schools have brought about the traditional curriculum of the grammar and secondary modern schools they will have put energy in developing other skills that were not have been measured by the reading and mathematics tests. This probably is the least important of the three factors.

In conclusion it would seem to be a pity that *Real Concern* was ever published. There is nothing wrong in trying to reach a wide audience but authors should realise that their own responsibilities increase when they make the attempt.

Real Research, the NCB's reply to the Centre's criticism suffers some extent from the nature of the criticisms being advanced. The message on the reading test scores not finally put to rest in this document. We still need to know more about the consequences of being a

initial high scorer (in the test age 11) on the subsequent score (age 16). If the initial criticism has been made in a more balanced and technically competent way we might well have had a more satisfactory reply. Most of the other points raised by Cox and Marks have been adequately answered.

On the main issue, given priority by the media and the sensitivity of public opinion, the NCT report remains reassuring. The performance of pupils in comprehensive schools on the C and A-level mathematics is very similar to that of grammar and secondary modern schools. If the findings of the NCT study on C and A-level results confirm these results then the question of the relative merits of the two systems can be authoritatively answered: attention can be focused on other aspects of our education system. One question should perhaps always be asked: why, for this lengthy period, have we not been able to achieve what relevance the standards that we insist upon at the secondary school level have for the future citizens of our society? What skills and attitudes are they likely to need? The answer, given by most of the tightly prescribed, examination-based curriculum, is that they are not.

T. A. Roberts

Colin Lacey is professor of education at the University of Sussex.

T. A. Roberts is professor of philosophy at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

BOOKS

The Liberals and Home Rule

The Liberals and Ireland: the Ulster question in British politics to 1914
by Patricia Jalland
Harvester Press, £20.00
ISBN 0 85527 627 5

Patricia Jalland's analysis of the Liberal party's involvement in Irish, and more particularly Ulster, affairs is mainly concerned with the Home Rule crisis of 1912-14, and is based on an impressive collection of unpublished private papers. This makes it by far the most systematic and exhaustive examination of the Asquithian Cabinet's Irish policy that has been written, or is likely to be written, for it is doubtful if Dr Jalland has left any stone unturned.

A study of this kind, resting almost exclusively on unpublished material, has its drawbacks as well as its merits. On the positive side it enables Dr Jalland to write a fascinating and intimate account of the ebb and flow of Cabinet decision-making, to explain the emergence of Churchill and Lloyd George as the government's "Irish experts", to expose, as it were, the muscled as well as the cynical Asquith's ministerial team. Above all, Dr Jalland highlights Asquith's own key position in Irish policy, and accounts for his inability to frustrate any attempt to modify the 1912 Home Rule Bill to meet Ulster Unionist objections before the constitutional arrangements of the Parliament Act of 1911 rendered such a compromise unlikely to succeed, and, indeed, almost impossible to formulate.

There is, however, a risk that the historian, immersed in the private papers of politicians, may conclude that they tell all that there is to be told about a particular event, and assume that the motives of men can be deduced exclusively from their diaries and letters. Does the lack of written evidence for a "plot" against Ulster in March, 1914 entirely rule out the possibility that some members of the Cabinet were prepared, not to plot against Ulster, but to test the mettle of Ulster Unionist strength and determination to resist Home Rule? Still, in the end, history rests on proof, not speculation, and it seems likely that Dr Jalland's patient and detailed exposition of a confused and complicated episode in civil-military relations will stand the test of time.

Moreover, although Dr Jalland has worked his way through politicians' papers, she has not succumbed to the temptation, common in some schools of thought, to depict politics as entirely the product of men who are climbing to the top of the greasy pole. She

makes it clear that there was in the Liberal party a genuine—if at times difficult—tradition of commitment to Home Rule dating from the Gladstonian era. She demolishes the commonly held assumption that the Home Rule Bill in 1912 because they were dependent on the votes of the Irish Nationalist MPs, and points out that their identification with the cause of Ireland was complete, however long its realization might be postponed by the vagaries of politics. She does not ignore personal ambitions and in-fighting, but these—surely the most over-emphasized and, ultimately, the least significant aspect of the world of politics—are put in perspective, and the connections between "high politics" and the mounting crisis in Ireland are convincingly delineated.

For Ireland and Ulster presented a serious crisis, and were not just part of the step-ladder to power within the Liberal party. Gladstone's original engagement to Home Rule for Ireland was not the cynical move of an old man in a hurry nor were Churchill and Lloyd George's search for a compromise on Ulster the moves of young men in an even greater hurry. Dr Jalland's reliance on the day-to-day writings of politicians does not impede her clear and convincing account of the Liberal failure to give shape and form to a Home Rule policy that was increasingly becoming one of drift rather than mastery. She makes the important, but hitherto ignored, point that the terms of the Parliament Act rendered any amendment to the Home Rule Bill essential before the end of the first parliamentary circuit; if no such compromise was reached then, any amendment required Opposition agreement, allowing the Unionists to seize the initiative, and possibly ruling out any chance of compromise at all. She shows clearly that the Curragh incident left the Government's Irish policy in ruins, and that the Buckingham Palace conference of July 1914 amounted to nothing more than a vain attempt to postpone the day of reckoning.

The day of reckoning was postponed by the outbreak of the First World War, and such was Liberal relief that the Irish question was, as subsumed in the larger crisis that a European war seemed almost preferable to a "bloody peace" at home. All this casts serious doubt on Asquith's "touch of Irish" which is favoured. Her book will prove an indispensable companion to those concerned with the study of Irish history, Liberal politics, and the process of decision-making in early twentieth-century British government.

Asquith's predicament in the years before the outbreak of the

war was real; and even if he had accepted the advice of those of his colleagues who believed that the Government, by standing fast, was losing rather than retaining the initiative, there still remained the difficulty of meeting southern Irish Unionist and Irish nationalist objections. Redmond proved himself amenable to the idea of self-determination in 1916; but could he have said this expedient to the Ulster nationalists, now at the height of their influence in the Irish Parliamentary Party, in 1912 or 1913? And would the southern Irish nationalists have been prepared to relax their grip on the British Conservatives? They were not even prepared to do this in 1916. To say that a different line of policy might have proved more tactically sound is not to agree that it would have provided any kind of peaceful resolution of the Irish, and especially the Ulster, crisis.

These are issues that are open to methodological debate; what cannot be disputed is the value of Dr Jalland's book, not only in the study of Anglo-Irish relations, but in the historiography of the British Liberal party. Dr Jalland argues that Asquith's failure to handle the Irish question with despatch had serious consequences for the party's ability to keep up the pace following his premature policies in the 1911 Insurance Act. In her exposition of the Gladstonian tradition, Dr Jalland surely underestimates the contribution of that tradition, not only to satisfying Liberal nationalist aspirations in the United Kingdom, but in giving the Liberals a firm commitment to social radicalism: the "Newcastle programme" of 1891, for example, included compulsory land acquisition, universal suffrage and employers' liability.

Gladstone provided his party with a programme which would satisfy social as well as economic radicals in the United Kingdom; his successors were unable to fulfil that programme; and it might be more useful to see Home Rule and social reform as complementary, rather than mutually exclusive. Indeed, it is well to be aware that the Liberal failure to appreciate this, as well as their tactical blunders, provide the key to the death of Liberal England. But Dr Jalland is right to emphasize the importance of the Irish issue for the party, however much this or that explains a Liberal's vote. Her book will prove an indispensable companion to those concerned with the study of Irish history, Liberal politics, and the process of decision-making in early twentieth-century British government.

Dr Boyce is lecturer in the department of political theory and government at University College, Swansea.

D. G. Boyce

Pre-war hostility

The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914
by Paul Kennedy
Allen & Unwin, £27.50
ISBN 0 04 940060 6

The First World War continues to move historians. Its causes seem so trivial compared to its effects. The diplomatic moves and counter-moves on July, 1914 set off an explosion whose shock waves still travel with us. Even the broader "causes" are difficult to explain. Why, for example, should two economically dependent states, Britain and Germany, with much in common, have become hostile? As early as 1904, when a befuddled Russian naval commander ordered his crew to "fire on German fishermen" under the impression that they were Japanese torpedo boats, Edwardian English public opinion burst out in a wave of indignation—not at Russia, but at Germany. Why Kaiser Wilhelm II and his admirals so determined to challenge the Royal Navy in its home waters by building battleships when building submarines and fast cruisers would have been cheaper, and, as the war itself showed, much more dangerous to British naval supremacy? Why did Germany's statesmen bungle the exercise of diplomatic isolation between 1906 and 1914, when British statesmen had handled very similar problems between 1896 and 1904 successfully?

Conventional diplomatic accounts of Anglo-German relations of which there are many give conventional answers to these questions. Paul Kennedy, on the other hand, started out "simply to produce a political narrative based upon as wide a range of sources as was currently available" and fortunately for us he devoted the rest of his life to this imperative task. For there is still a demand, especially from beginners about to plunge into these turbulent problems, for a reliable instructor. Kennedy is just the man, an historian for whom "balance" is a central preoccupation. The three narrative sections of the book provide a fluent and sensible reading of Anglo-German relations in the periods 1860 to the 1880s, 1880s to 1906 and 1907 to 1914. Dr Kennedy does not claim to offer anything very new in these sections (although his treatment of Bismarck's colonial policy was certainly original) but the sheer scale of his reading (the footnotes and bibliography alone covering 111 pages) comes close by its very comprehensiveness to offering us a fresh look at well-known issues.

Between the lengthy narrative sections two massive "structural examinations", each more than a hundred pages. In these sections Dr Kennedy stops the clock and takes a look at the two societies in a rigorously comparative way: the economic, political, religious and cultural structures of each; the press, religious groups, culture in the broader sense and the role of ideas. The juxtaposition is fascinating.

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German liberalism by the 1870s had begun to shrivel by comparison with the flourishing Gladstonian movement with its deep roots in nonconformity and the world of the skilled artisan. By the time of the second structural comparison at the turn of the twentieth century German liberalism had disappeared as a significant force, while British liberalism was about to give Edwardian England an Indian summer reform.

The "structural examinations" alter the narrative account of less than Dr Kennedy would have done. Several times he points out that elements in the structural analysis are not really "relevant" and it is true that the structural sections can be read as if the general examinations had been omitted. I think Kennedy is wrong under the impression that the narrative more plausible, but not quite in the way he thinks. For example, it is well known that the eve of the First World War members of the Liberal Cabinet opposed British entry into the war. There was no equivalent to it in the living-embodiment of the issues discussed in the two "structural examinations"? Kennedy's career from his childhood in Blackburn doctor's home to a highest office of state and his later in the nineteenth century, the Victorian sense of nature as a benevolent influence on man becomes complicated by the Victorian conception of nature as blindly indifferent; it is the presentation of these ideas in fiction which is the subject of Dr Ebbatson's interesting book.

Wordsworthian benevolence and Darwinian determinism are found in a complex interaction in some of the works of D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence was aware of the struggle inherent in all organic life, but also of the irrelevance of the whole natural world; Ebbatson traces the origins of much of Lawrence's thought on these issues to his early reading in the Transcendentalists, and also to Haeckel, whose evolutionary *The Riddle of the Universe* was known to Lawrence as early as 1908. After an

I do not think, then, that the elements of the press in Victorian life are irrelevant. It is well to be aware that John Galsworthy emerged and, in the early 1900s, developed a sort of political philosophy. Between these two massive "structural examinations", each more than a hundred pages. In these sections Dr Kennedy stops the clock and takes a look at the two societies in a rigorously comparative way: the economic, political, religious and cultural structures of each; the press, religious groups, culture in the broader sense and the role of ideas. The juxtaposition is fascinating.

Dr Steinberg is a fellow of the Hall, Cambridge.

Jonathan Steinberg

BOOKS

Lawrence's natural forebears

Lawrence and the Nature Tradition: themes in English fiction 1859-1914
by Roger Ebbatson
Harvester Press, £20.00
ISBN 0 391 01884 1

Dr Ebbatson is concerned with a theme which goes back at least as far as Rousseau, who (according to Leavis) was the first to pose the central problem of anthropology, "the passage from nature to culture".

Rousseau was concerned, in the *Discours sur l'Inégalité*, with the transition from the affective to the intellectual from the felt to the understood, the sensation to the idea; and it can be credibly suggested that much of the seminal literature of the last two hundred years has been concerned with the way in which man experiences and understands the external world. The poet, in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, "considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and reacting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure"; and *The Prelude* may be seen as a progress from the first image of the child bathing in the stream to the mature understanding of man's place in relation to the world about him. Later in the nineteenth century, the Wordsworthian sense of nature as a benevolent influence on man becomes complicated by the Victorian conception of nature as blindly indifferent; it is the presentation of these ideas in fiction which is the subject of Dr Ebbatson's interesting book.

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A writer remembered and rediscovered

The Icknield Way
by Edward Thomas
introduced by Shirley Toulson
Wildwood House, £2.95
ISBN 0 7045 0407 3

The Poetry of Edward Thomas
by Andrew Motion
Blackstone & Kegan Paul, £4.95
ISBN 0 7100 0471 0

A decade ago C. H. Sisson wrote of Edward Thomas: "I would say that 50 years have not yet given him his rightful place. He is, without doubt, one of the most profound poets of the century." In the interim we have seen the publication of a serviceable but unexciting study of Thomas's life and work, the splendid but in some ways forbidding *Collected Poems* from the Clarendon Press, and the release of the poet's posthumous and eloquent book on Richard Jefferies. These are now joined by one of Thomas's most memorable topographical books and the first full-length study confined to the work which has never needed academics to keep it in print. Its poetry, if the former reminds us that it has been a long road, the latter unmistakably indicates that the "rightful place" is coming into view.

The Icknield Way is well worth the publisher's "rediscovery" which is also planned for other neglected books among them other volumes of Thomas's prose, which he himself knew only too well to be "hackwork" for the most part. It expresses, they tell us, "the values which we hope the series will encourage and sustain. Her prose is left to readers to infer, although Shirley Toulson's unnecessary introduction, awkwardly separating Thomas's dedication from the text proper, is presumably designed to facilitate inference. Her prose is particularly fine when, as in the next to Thomas's vivid, depressed "Dedication", in which he calls *The Icknield Way* "another of those books made out of books

analysis of *The White Peacock*, social demarcations, and what Lawrence called (speaking of Jane Austen) a "sharp knowing in appearance". In the novels this engages us with the turn to nature; urbanity and wit hold the reader in certain ways which make it difficult for him to surrender to the powerful or rhapsodic. So Forster's natural description often becomes heavily symbolic, like the landscapes and skyfields in *Howards End*, or it seems contrived and heavy, as in *The Longest Journey*.

The vital tradition of Meredith (the Wilcoxes at Oniton) and fine writing (England seen from the Blackthorn Hill). It is not just a question of tone: Forster was an Arnoldian liberal, and when he says that in these English farms "one might see life steadily and see it whole", he is marrying this liberalism to a love of the countryside which is quite different from the primitive, instinctual feelings of a Wordsworth or a Jefferies. This is why some readers are uncomfortable with scenes such as the bathing in *A Room with a View*: Dr Ebbatson keeps a straight face while he recounts an episode, but his summary of the way in which "they rotate around the pool" will not persuade those who are inclined to persuade a certain merit that they ought to do the same.

Not all of Dr Ebbatson's writers belong so conveniently together, or have been so simplistically treated if they do; but it is the essence of definitions and redefinitions of the term "Nature". Yet this reading has its advantages, since it places *Tess* neatly within a certain tradition which it indubitably touches. This tradition is more centrally represented by Richard Jefferies, whose novels are discussed with a delightful enthusiasm, and less centrally by W. H. Auden, who moved from the narrow confines of his childhood to an imaginative and mystical response to nature.

The last guest at the feast, E. M. Forster, seems to be half of the company and half not. Clearly *The Longest Journey*, *Howards End*, and *Maurice* as Dr Ebbatson points out, "all finally endorse the supremacy of Nature"; but there is much travelling before we get to that "Finally". In Forster there is a natural impulse which is comic, satiric, and descriptive; with Auden-Austen-like accuracy about trivial

founded on other books". This is truly only the second chapter in which hardly any of the words are his own, though he may also have been thinking of the section in chapter eight concerned with Montgomery's poem of 1827, "Pellucid Island", in which he says "unusually dismissive" of a book that any walker will be glad to have with him, despite its melancholy, for company.

Montgomery's poem, which Thomas was reading out on the Downs at Blewbury prompts one of his most memorable portraits of the man who, walking the roads, "always carries a book with him". It will be rather difficult to do this with the release of *The Icknield Way* which is in larger format than the 1929 reprint of the first edition. However, in Thomas's own words, "it is not to a man walking for pleasure that we shall go for a sense of roads".

The book was written during his most serious period of depression and there are many signs in it that he found both the experience and the writing of it wearisome, its best moments—including that in which he listens to the rain at East Head—see those in which, like the "lean, indefinite man" whom he meets in chapter five, he "could not decide whether his condition was to be described as happiness or melancholy". The chapter actually opens with such a moment:

"The roads had been talking in my sleep much too long before I started next day. Their voices and the blinding window-blinds described the morning for me before I stirred. I could see and feel it all; and if I could write it down as I saw and felt it this would be a good book and no mistake. There is enough of what Thomas saw and felt in *The Icknield Way* to call it, despite its evident shortcomings, a good book, and to hope that the rest of a promising series will contain prose as free from rhetoric as the above. It was of course the quality

of the prose, and what Lawrence called (speaking of Jane Austen) a "sharp knowing in appearance". In the novels this engages us with the turn to nature; urbanity and wit hold the reader in certain ways which make it difficult for him to surrender to the powerful or rhapsodic. So Forster's natural description often becomes heavily symbolic, like the landscapes and skyfields in *Howards End*, or it seems contrived and heavy, as in *The Longest Journey*.

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J. R. Watson

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Frenetic to be free!

Quest for Eros: Browning and "Fifine"
by Samuel B. Southwell
University Press of Kentucky, \$17.00
ISBN 0 8131 1399 7

Browning's *Fifine at the Fair* is about sexuality; it has usually been read simply as a casuistical justification of infidelity spoken by a Breton Don Juan—who is animated by the seductive *Fifine*, a grey-eyed, in a local fair—to his wife Elvire. But this reductionist view sanitizes Browning by dissociating him from the symbolic vision of the impulse to sexual freedom which, as Professor Southwell's important study emphasizes, is the motive force of the poem.

Of course, as a mid-Victorian, Browning had to lay false trails to deter the hounds of the Grundy pack from snapping at his heels. *Fifine*, one of his late and difficult poems, is a poem that he "dared not let them understand". Southwell explores Don Juan's sexual reaction to *Fifine* and the freedoms of the troupe at the fair: "My heart makes just the same/Passionately stretch the speaker says. Another of its phrases sums up his (and the Victorians') condition: "Frenetic to be free!"

Southwell sees the poem as a quest for this freedom, even though for reasons of external propriety the quest ends in anger and frustration. Armed with an exact conception of the unconscious, Browning powerfully endorses sexuality as the most vital force of human culture. By identifying vaginal and phallic symbolism that was pre-Browning's contemporaries, Southwell makes a radical contribution in the reading of *Fifine*.

In attempting to fulfil his "quest for Eros" Browning had two ob-

stacles to surmount, Christian culture and the memory of Elizabeth (who had died 11 years earlier). Browning's poetry is permeated by the problem of reconciling love of God and love of the world; in *Fifine* religion is seen as transient, morality as an inferior institution, and the inhibiting role of Christianity is deplored. The memory of Elizabeth is exercised through an elegiac process of remembering in order to forget.

Southwell shows how the poem's shifts between a metaphysical and a dramatic level accord with a developing intellectual inquiry: Browning has been unfairly criticized for subjugating the poetic medium to a didactic process of remembering in order to forget.

Southwell's own writing can be knotty, and sometimes concision and simplicity would have served better than criticism ("a parved and disguised objectification of an incipient emotional reorientation"). But no summary review can do justice to the subtlety of Southwell's exploration of Browning's terminology, often disclosing previously unperceived meaning and consistency at a primary semantic level.

This is a stimulating, conscientious and rewarding study, the best reading of *Fifine* yet to appear. Professor Southwell shows the poem, in its radical implications, to be at the heart of the tensions of Victorian culture.

Richard H. Taylor

Dr Taylor is senior lecturer in English at Stockwell College, University of London Institute of Education.

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